

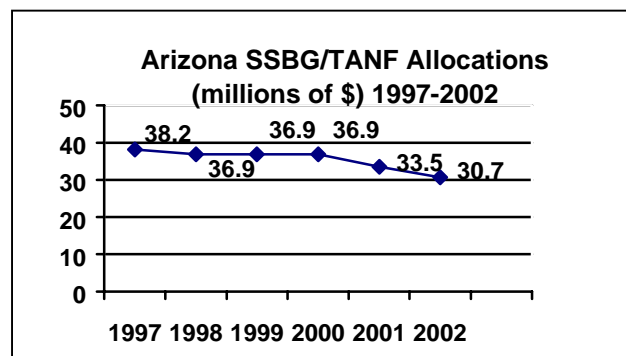
**UPDATE**

# SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

**Background** – The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) program dates back to the Nixon Administration, as part of efforts to turn back federal funds to the states. The Arizona Dept. of Economic Security (DES) was the state agency designated to handle the SSBG funds. DES turned to the local Councils of Government (COGs) to help determine how the funds should best be spent. What evolved was a new regional planning structure which is still operating today, annually planning for the SSBG funding and relating it to needs for all types of social services. In the last fiscal year, approximately 566,000 clients in Arizona were served by over 250 agencies across the state, which are funded by the federal Social Services Block Grant. The Arizona SSBG allocation in 1999 was \$32.9 million, of which **\$4.8 million** was for Maricopa County, planned through the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG).

The City of Tempe and Tempe Community Council both participate in the MAG Human Services Planning structure. **Tom Canasi**, Tempe Social Services Manager, chairs the MAG Human Services Technical Committee and **Kate Hanley and Steve Wise** of the TCC staff participate as members. The Technical Committee reports to the Human Services Coordinating Committee, on which Tempe Councilman **Dennis Cahill** and TCC former board member **Maureen Mageau-Dicindis** both serve. These groups formulate the annual MAG Human Services Plan and recommend it to the MAG Regional Council (currently chaired by Tempe Mayor **Neil Giuliano**).

**Recent Trends** – *SSBG appropriations have been going down* in recent years, from \$38.2 million in the 1997 Fiscal Year to a projected \$29.1 million for FY 2002, *a \$9 million decrease*. To their credit, the Governor and the Legislature have made efforts to shift extra funds from federal welfare funds (TANF) to lessen the effect of the reductions. DES has also shifted some additional funds to help support the overall needs. However, most of the funding reduction will take effect.



**Effects of funding reductions** – SSBG/TANF funds are used for a variety of services for the target groups of Adults/Families, Aging, Developmentally Disabled and Physically Disabled and are a part of the overall funding structure for many other funding sources including the Area Agency on Aging. The net effect for Maricopa County for the coming fiscal year will be a **\$608,836** reduction from the 1999 level, meaning only **83.8%** of the former funds will be available for services in 2001. The chart below shows a partial listing of agencies serving Tempe and the SSBG funded services they provide.

| AGENCY                               | SSBG SERVICES AND CLIENTS  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| East Valley Catholic Social Services | Case Management- pregnant teens  |
| Southwest Human Development          | Parent skills training   |
| Empact                               | School-based prevention  |
| Save the Family Foundation           | Case management for homeless families  |
| Sojourner Center                     | Case management for domestic violence victims  |
| United Methodist Outreach Ministries | Case management for homeless families  |
| Chrysalis                            | Counseling for domestic violence victims   |
| Central Arizona Shelter Services     | Transportation for homeless persons  |
| Arizona Bridge to Independent Living | Volunteer management   |
| Tempe Community Action Agency        | Counseling, home delivered meals, health promotion, senior center, transportation for elderly  |
| The Centers for Habilitation         | Employment supports for persons with physical and developmental disabilities; attendant care for persons with developmental disabilities |
| Center Against Sexual Abuse          | Counseling for persons with developmental disabilities   |

How those cuts will be distributed will be the subject of some very difficult choices soon to be made.